**Applied (Qualitative and Quantitative) Psycho-Social Research Methods and Techniques**

## Prof. Cinzia Castiglioni; Prof. Andrea Bonanomi

***COURSE AIMS AND INTENDED LEARNING OUTCOMES***

Provide basic knowledge and applicative skills for designing and conducting psycho-social research applied to marketing and to quantitative and qualitative organisations.

*Qualitative Research Module*

The *qualitative research* module (Prof. Castiglioni) aims to teach students the concepts related to:

– the theoretical-epistemological roots underlying the main methods of qualitative research;

– the main methodological options of qualitative research (e.g. grounded theory, ethnography, interpretative phenomenology ...);

– the main techniques for collecting qualitative research data (e.g. interviews, focus groups, ideational groups, observational techniques ...);

– the most recent evidence on the value of participant engagement in qualitative research;

– the validity criteria of qualitative research.

At the end of the module, students will be able to carry out planning, implementation, data analysis and communication of results according to the theoretical-methodological principles of the main qualitative research approaches applied to the study of organisations and psycho-social phenomena, of social research and marketing. Furthermore, students will also know the main methods of qualitative research and be able to make appropriate methodological choices according to the phenomena being investigated. Finally, students will possess the knowledge and skills necessary to evaluate the validity and methodological rigour of qualitative research.

*Quantitative Research Module*

The specific objective of the *quantitative research* module (Prof. Bonanomi) will be to provide students with knowledge of and skills in the most common multivariate statistical analysis procedures used in quantitative research.

The course aims to offer advanced training in measurement theory in psychology and statistical data analysis, providing the necessary knowledge for developing appropriate methodological skills and for studying the main statistical methods and models used in psychological sciences.

At the end of the course, students will be able to: identify the research problem; choose the different technicalities to deal with the problem; apply the appropriate multivariate and psychometric statistical procedures, using dedicated software to obtain key results; read and interpret conclusions obtained; and draw up a report presenting results. In particular, practical workshops will allow students to develop their ability to apply knowledge to different contexts and to different problematic situations.

***COURSE CONTENT***

*Qualitative Research Module*

1. *The design of a qualitative research study*:

– Qualitative research in organisations: topics/questions and its main theoretical-methodological articulations.

– Critical review of the main paradigms and theories of qualitative research.

2. *The main methods and techniques of qualitative research:*

– Criteria for defining a qualitative research design.

– Review of the main qualitative research methods (Grounded theory, interpretative phenomenology, ethnography ...) and techniques (Focus groups, ideational groups, interview, observational techniques).

3. *The execution and applications of qualitative research:*

– From data analysis to the building of results.

* Validity criteria and rigour of qualitative research.
* The value of participant engagement in qualitative research.

– Applying qualitative research to the main problems of marketing and organisations, and to psycho-social phenomena.

*Quantitative Research Module*

1. *Quantitative psychosocial research*

– Methodological and technical choices in quantitative research.

– Using statistics in applied psychosocial research: samples and analysis choice according to the objectives.

– Communication of research results.

2.  *Review of statistics*

– Data and measurement scales.

3. *Multivariate techniques*

Presentation of multivariate techniques and their use, in particular:

a) analysis of cause-effect relationships

– multiple regression;

– logistic regression;

– t tests for independent and paired samples;

– Anova, Manova, Ancova.

b) size reduction

– main components;

– factor analysis.

c) segmentation analysis

– hierarchical and non-hierarchical cluster analysis.

d) *notes on other multivariate statistical analysis techniques (conjoint analysis, decision trees, correspondence analysis)*.

***READING LIST***

Lecture notes provided by the lecturers.

Furthermore, with reference to the qualitative research module, the following basic text is compulsory:

J. Morse-L. Richards, *Fare ricerca qualitativa: prima guida,* 2001, Italian edition edited by F. Gatti-G. Graffigna, F. Angeli, Milan, 2009.

Optional texts for the qualitative module

C. Cassell-G. Symon, *Essential Guide to Qualitative Methods in Organizational Research,* Sage, 2004.

H. Mariampolski, *Qualitative Market Research,* Sage, 2001.

Texts for the quantitative research module are:

De Lillo-Argentin-Lucchini-Sarti-Terraneo, *Analisi Multivariata per le scienze sociali,* Pearson, 2007.

Optional texts for the quantitative research module are:

G. Cavrini-S. Mignani-G. Soffritti, *Esercizi di Analisi Statistica Multivariata risolti con SPSS per Windows,* Esculapio, Bologna, 2006.

Giorgetti-Massaro, *Ricerca e percorsi di analisi dati con SPSS,* Pearson, 2007.

A. Field, *Discovering statistics using IBM SPSS statistics*. SAGE, 2013.

***TEACHING METHOD***

The course will feature highly interactive teaching that includes lectures, practical tutorials (in the classroom and remotely), discussion of cases, and - in the case of the quantitative research module - practical sessions on a Personal Computer with IBM SPSS software.

***ASSESSMENT METHOD AND CRITERIA***

The final mark will be the arithmetic average of the results obtained in the two modules.

*Qualitative Research Module*

Students’ learning will be verified through an individual oral exam on the lecture contents and on the reference texts.

Assessment will focus on students' knowledge and methodological skills in conceiving, designing and implementing qualitative research applied to marketing, the problems of organisations and psycho-social phenomena.

In particular, students will have to demonstrate an ability to correctly work with the different theoretical, methodological and technical options of qualitative research, in order to guarantee methodological coherence in the research design and its ability to respond to real pragmatic problems in the social field.

The final mark for the qualitative research module, on a 30-point scale, will assess students’ knowledge and skills according to the following ranges:

* incomplete or insufficient knowledge of the methodological approaches addressed in the course: lower than 18
* Exclusively mnemonic knowledge and limited skills regarding the methodological approaches addressed in the course: 18/22
* fair ability to apply knowledge and good skills regarding the methodological approaches addressed in the course: 22/26
* excellent ability to apply knowledge and solid skills regarding the methodological approaches addressed in the course: 27/30

*Quantitative Research Module*

The exam for the *quantitative research* part will be practical and carried out directly on the computer. It will include complex research problems and datasets. Students will have to show their ability to carry out analyses, interpret them and present them in a written or oral research report.

Assessment will focus on students' ability to identify choices consistent with the research problem, to analyse data using the software, to read results correctly, and to present them in a written or oral summary report.

***NOTES AND PREREQUISITES***

There are no prerequisites for taking the qualitative research module. However, some interest and intellectual curiosity in research applied to psycho-social phenomena, and a willingness to work in a dynamic and interactive setting, are assumed.

For the quantitative research module, the following prerequisites are required:

1. Basic descriptive statistics (summary indices of position and variability, z standardised scores).
2. Bivariate statistics (chi square, linear correlation) and linear regression analysis.
3. Inferential statistics (confidence intervals and parameter estimation).
4. Statistical tests (H0 and H1, regions of rejection, significance test, p-value, test function).
5. The most well-known distribution statistics (normal, chi square, student's t).

Further information can be found on the lecturer's webpage at http://docenti.unicatt.it/web/searchByName.do?language=ENG or on the Faculty notice board.